

AMENDMENTS IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

1-18. Cancelled.

19. (Currently amended) A method to detect unauthorized attempts to detect identity information of an individual, to reclaim identity information obtained without authorization, to detect inaccuracies in identity information and to prevent unauthorized access to identity information, the method comprising the steps of:

- a. establishing a database of known private information of one or more individuals;
- b. establishing a database of replicated information contained in one or more databases containing stored private information of the one or more individuals;
- c. establishing indicia of unauthorized storage or use, or inaccuracies, of stored private information;
- d. persistently scanning one or more network communication systems for the indicia, which may be in the one or more databases containing stored private information, without requiring initiation of the scanning through an action of the one or more individuals;
- e. recording location information of the one or more databases containing the stored private information;
- f. comparing the known private information and the stored private information; and
- g. notifying the one or more individuals when the indicia are detected.

20. (Previously entered) The method as claimed in Claim 19 further comprising the step of blocking access to the stored private information.

21. (Previously entered) The method as claimed in Claim 19 further comprising the step of reporting unauthorized use or storage of stored private information, inaccurate stored private information, or a combination of the two.

22. (Previously entered) The method as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the database of known private information and the database of replicated information form part of a common database.

23. (Previously entered) The method as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the step of notifying is performed by establishing a graphical user interface for the one or more individuals to observe one or more indicators of private information usage or storage based on the established indicia.

24. (Previously entered) The method as claimed in Claim 23 wherein the one or more indicators include a green light representation to show acceptable usage or storage, a yellow light to show potentially unacceptable usage or storage, and a red light to show unacceptable usage or storage.

25. (Previously entered) The method as claimed in Claim 19 wherein the one or more databases replicated include credit reporting service databases, court records databases, deed registry databases, and criminal record databases.

26. (Currently amended) A system to detect and protect against unauthorized use or storage of an individual's personal information, or inaccuracies in such personal information, the system comprising:

- a. a first database of known private information of one or more individuals;
- b. means for persistently searching one or more other databases for stored private information of the one or more individuals;
- c. a second database of the stored private information obtained from the means for searching and of the electronic location of the one or more other databases containing the stored private information;
- d. means for comparing the known private information of the first database with the stored private information of the second database, which means may be activated without initiation through an action by the one or more individuals; and
- e. notification means for notifying any of the one or more individuals when the obtained stored private information for such individual or individuals differs from the known

private information, is stored in a database not authorized to have the stored private information, or a combination of the two.

27. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 26 wherein the first database and the second database form part of a common database.

28. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 26 wherein the one or more other databases are substantially continuously searched for stored private information.

29. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 28 wherein the means for searching is a search agent program selected from the group consisting of web spiders, bots, and robots.

30. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 26 wherein the one or more databases include credit reporting service databases, court records databases, deed registry databases, and criminal record databases.

31. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 26 embodied in one or more computer programs.

32. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 31 accessible through a computer interconnection system, wherein the one or more individuals providing the known private information may provide the known private information to the first database through the computer interconnection system, and may further access the notification means through the computer interconnection system.

33. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 32 wherein the notification means includes an interactive graphical user interface.

34. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 26 further comprising an input device to enable the one or more individuals to report inaccurate private information, unauthorized usage of or access to the private information, or a combination of the two.

35. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 26 further comprising a third database of one or more indicia of unauthorized storage or use of private information.

36. (Previously entered) The system as claimed in Claim 35 wherein the third database is updatable and is accessed by the means for comparing to detect differences between the known private information and the stored private information, to detect unauthorized use or storage of the stored private information, or a combination of the two.